

# Extended Rotation Forest (ERF) Policy Review & Recommendations

Minnesota Forest Resources  
Council

January 23, 2013

1. A brief history of older forest policy
2. Review group findings and new policy direction
3. Monitoring needs - review group and strategies



Extended Rotation Forest

*Policy Review and Recommendations*

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

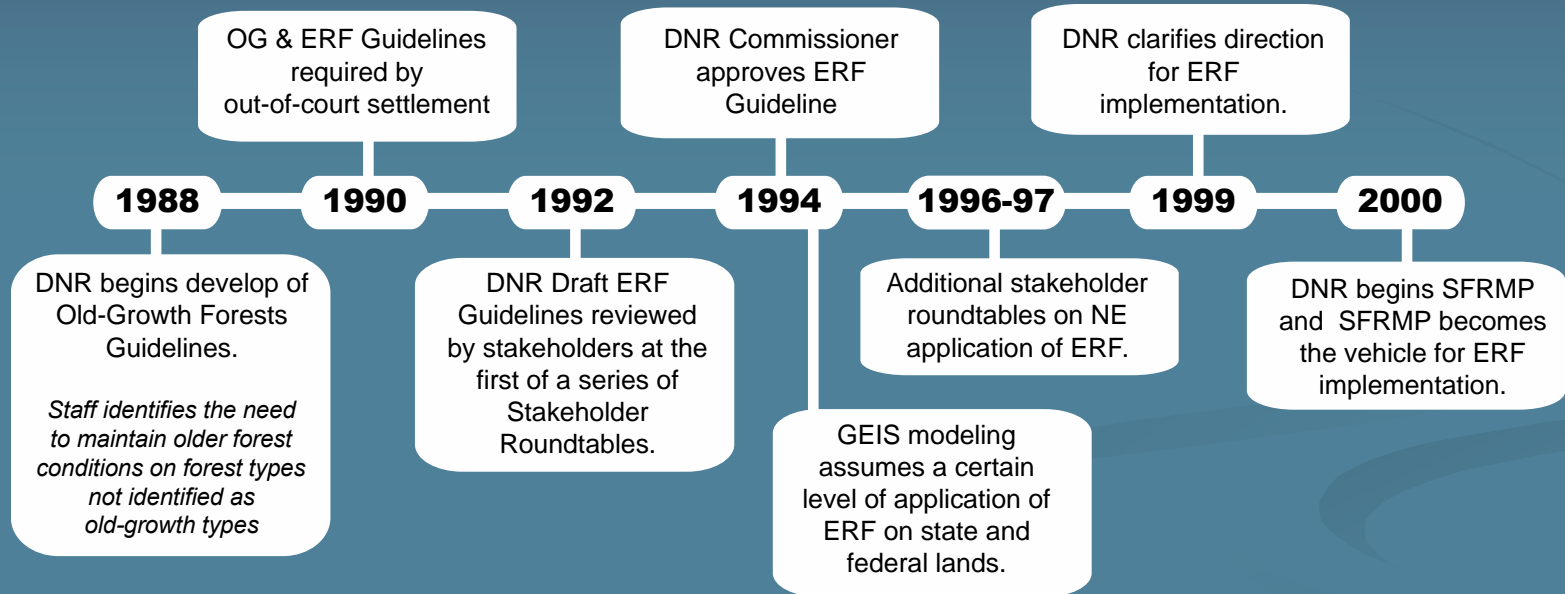
July 2012

# What is Older Forest?

- Formerly known as ERF
- The amount of certain forest types that are beyond their “normal rotation age” at a specific point in time
  - Forest types with older forest goals include Aspen, Birch, Jack Pine, Red Pine, Balsam Fir, Lowland Black Spruce, Tamarack.
  - These “even-aged” types require substantial disturbance (i.e., opening up the canopy) to regenerate.
  - Normal rotation age is generally the age where growth peaks and is generally the point when harvest would occur IF maximizing timber volumes were your primary objective.

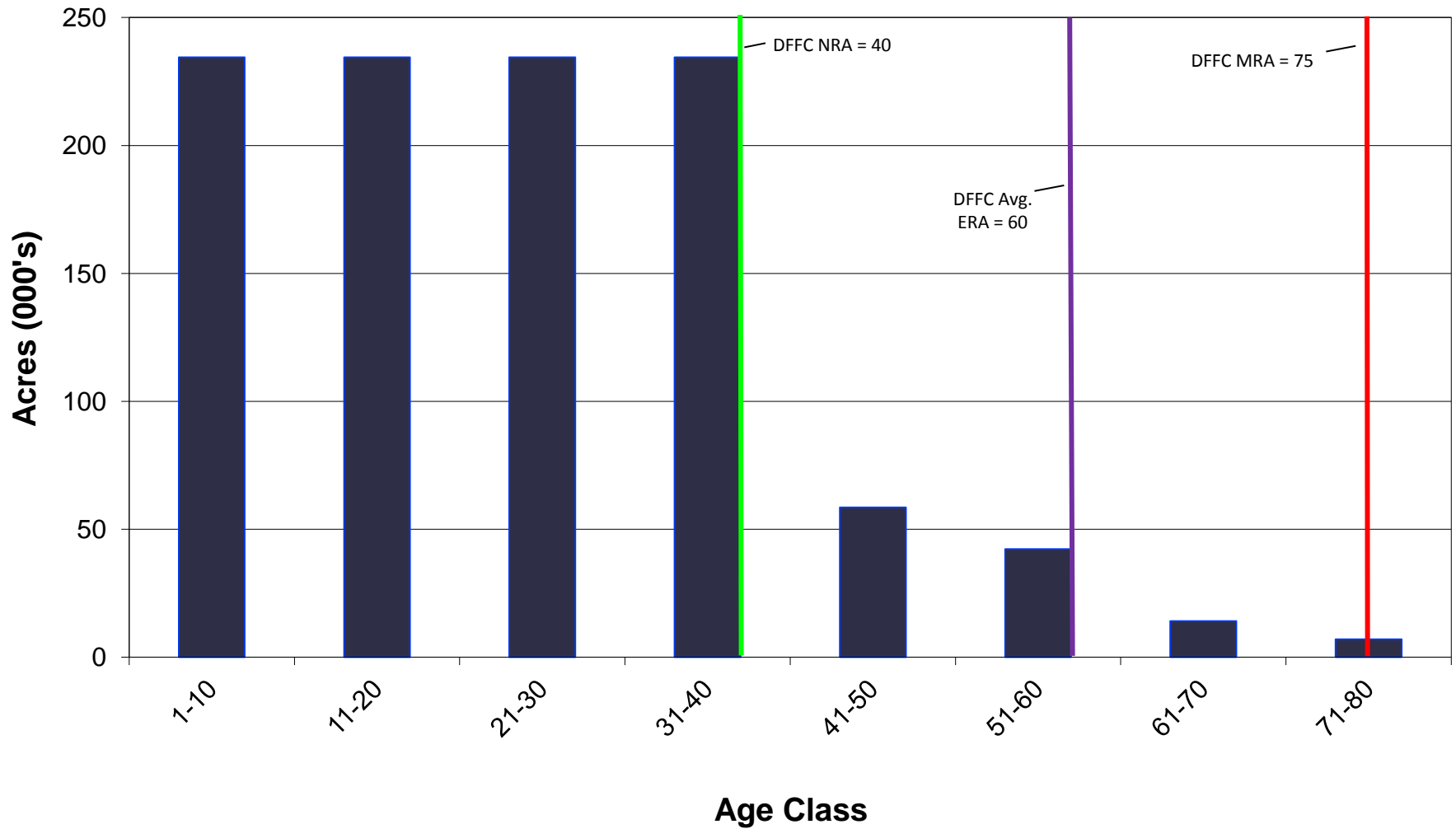


# Brief History of ERF



# ERF Application

## Example of Current Application



# ERF Review Findings

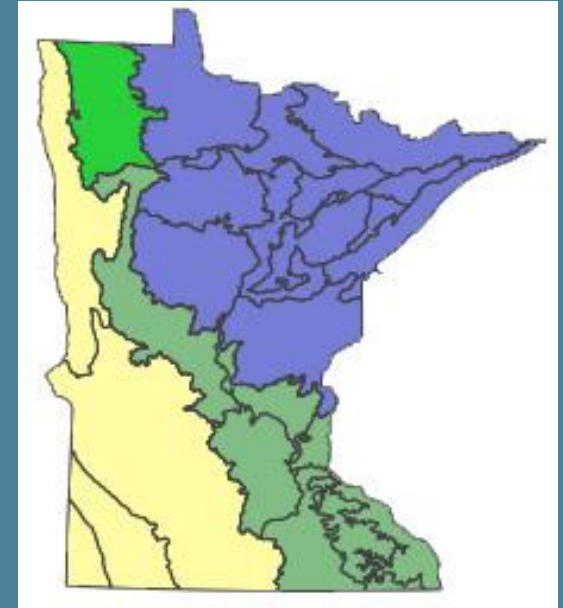
- Statewide harvest levels from all ownerships have declined substantially (4.1 million to 2.5 million cords).
- Across all ownerships, MN forest lands in general have continued to grow older.
- On DNR lands, the amount of older forest remains over the SFRMP goal (average of 12%).
- Management practices formalized over the past 20 years enhance old forest benefits. (Forest Management Guidelines, OFMC, EILC, RMZ, RSA's, Patches, unevenaged covertypes)
- Need to consider revenue implications in managing for older forests (e.g., Trust Fund).
- DNR needs to continue representing all ages classes through management.





# Older Forest Policy Recommendations

1. Use an adaptive approach for management of older forests.
  - Using SFRMP desired age class distribution as a benchmark applies across all ownerships
  - Monitoring the status of forest age-class distributions across all ownerships and DNR timberlands
  - Adjusting management of DNR forest age-classes in response to changing conditions across all ownerships.
2. Develop a monitoring program to support adaptive approach for older forest management.
3. Pursuing development of a plot-based continuous forest inventory system on state lands.



# Related Recommendations

1. Manage planted red pine stands as a separate cover type using economic rotation ages and no designated ERF.
  - Natural origin stands should be managed to reflect a more natural age class distribution, with regeneration strategies that try to mimic natural stands.
  - There should be a final harvest pool in both the planted and natural origin stands.
2. Form a workgroup ASAP to evaluate how rotation ages are set in the SFRMP process. This is in process.



# A note about monitoring:

An interdisciplinary older forest monitoring workgroup has been established.

Likely a three pronged approach (Craig's thoughts):

1. Stand Exam Layer for management elements that contribute to older forest benefits.
2. Utilize FIA for now. Double intensity.
3. Develop plot based inventory and monitoring system

According to the new policy:

1. Monitoring reports will be prepared every 5 years.
2. We also monitor harvest level. Report sets a trigger point at 3.5 MM cords harvest level for re-evaluating older forest policy.





# Questions?

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